



Chichester Beekeepers
A Division of West Sussex Beekeepers' Association

'Introduction to Beekeeping'

A Six-Week Course
Spring 2025



The Chichester Division of West Sussex Beekeepers and its officers and members shall not be liable for any advice and information given in good faith during this course and for any subsequent action taken by those participating in it. All information given is provided to encourage the craft of beekeeping and for no other reason.

Introduction to Beekeeping

A six-week course of five evening classes, each of two hours duration (7.00pm for 7.15pm-9.15pm) plus three visits to our bees at our new teaching apiary. Proposed dates for the three apiary sessions are shown in the programme, but these are conditional on the weather as we will always do the very best for our bees.

Alternative dates are shown and these will be used if the weather prevents earlier sessions. A minimum attendance of three Thursday evening sessions and two apiary visits are required for certification.

Detailed course notes will be provided by email prior to each classroom session.

Classroom Venue: Boxgrove Village Hall, The Street, Boxgrove. PO18 0EE

Apiary Location: TBC

Tutors: Christine Stevens, Alan Aldridge, Mike Wagstaff, Dick Bowyer & Graham Elliott

Benefits included in the cost of the course:

- Full (registered) membership of Chichester Beekeepers for 2025
- Membership of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) & West Sussex BKA
- 12 monthly copies of the BBKA News
- Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) for up to three hives for one year
- 3rd Party Public Liability Insurance Cover for one year (provided by the BBKA)
- Monthly copy of both the Chichester Division and West Sussex BKA newsletters
- Admission to the Wednesday monthly meetings of Chichester Beekeepers
- Admission to Chichester Beekeepers' new teaching apiary.
- The 'Haynes Bee Manual'

Course fee: £120 (partner £75)

Course Contents and Programme

Preliminary Classroom: Thursday 27th February

7:15-9:15 pm

Tutors: Christine, Alan, Mike, Dick & Graham

- Meeting the tutors and preparing for the course
- Course pack
- Video of beekeeping
- Handling the demonstration hive (no bees!)

Classroom 1: Thursday 6th March

7:15-9:15 pm

Tutors: Christine & Graham

Introduction and Natural History of Bees

- Importance of beekeeping
- Local and national support
- What is a honey bee?
- Origins of bees and their life within the colony
- Pollination, nectar and honey
- Wax, propolis, pollen and stings
- Bee life cycle, queen and mating process

Classroom 2: Thursday 13th March

7:15-9:15 pm

Tutors: Alan & Mike

The Hive

- Different types of hive and a brief history
- Organization of a hive
- Hive components
- Setting up an apiary
- Introduction to apiary visits

Classroom 3: Thursday 20th March

7:15- 9:15 pm

Tutors: Christine & Dick

Swarms

- Swarms – reasons, control, prevention
- Introduction to second & third apiary visits

Apiary Visit 1: Saturday 22nd March

10:00 - 12:00

- **A bee suit, wellies and rubber gloves (Marigolds are fine) will be required.**
- Apiary meetings are weather dependent and will be confirmed nearer the time but may still be postponed at short notice.

Classroom 4: Thursday 27th March

7:15-9:15 pm

Tutors: Christine & Mike

The Beekeeping Year – part one (including Pests and Diseases)

- Seasonal activities and preparation
- Pests, diseases, the Varroa mite and Asian hornet
- Statutory Requirements
- Local forage crops

Apiary Visit 2: Saturday 29th March

10:00 - 12:00

To improve their learning and confidence, all current students are welcome and encouraged to attend the apiary each weekend and observe or join in the regular hive management.

Classroom 5: Thursday 3rd April

7:15-9:15 pm

Tutors: Christine & Graham

The Beekeeping Year – part two

Continuation of Classroom 4 detailed above

Apiary Visit 3: Saturday 5th April

10:00 - 12:00

Reserve Apiary Visits: 19th & 26th April

TBC

There will be a short stretch break during all classroom sessions. Please bring your own refreshments if you wish as the kitchen will be closed.

All details are correct at the time of publication